

From the Puget Sound Business Journal:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/blog/health-care-inc/2016/05/swedish-ballard-opens-22-bed-bahavioral-health.html>

Swedish Ballard opens 22-bed behavioral health unit

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Swedish Medical Center opened a new 22-bed behavioral health unit Tuesday at its Ballard location, furthering the efforts throughout the industry to expand behavior health services in Washington.

The project cost just shy of \$12 million and stemmed from a conversation about improving psychiatric care between Swedish, the **Washington State Hospital Association** and other member hospitals back in 2013.

“It quickly became evident there was a critical shortage of regional acute care beds to serve patients with both psychiatric and medical needs in a community hospital setting,” said Dr. Arpan Waghray, system medical director for behavioral health at Swedish.



COURTESY OF SWEDISH MEDICAL CENTER

Swedish Medical Center has opened a new 22-bed behavioral health unit at its Ballard campus.

Washington state ranks near the lowest in the nation in terms of inpatient psychiatric capacity, which has left the state struggling to find enough beds for psychiatric patients.

Since psychiatric boarding – the practice of detaining patients with mental health problems without treatment because of limited psychiatric beds – was deemed unlawful by Washington state Supreme Court, health systems have been starting to open new facilities and units around the state at a faster pace.

A new 20-bed inpatient psychiatric unit opened in March at Auburn Medical Center. Washington state Department of Health also approved an application from **MultiCare Health System** and CHI Franciscan Health to jointly build and operate a \$41 million, 120-bed nonprofit psychiatric hospital in Tacoma. Construction of the hospital is slated to begin this year and be completed in 2018.

Last month, Providence Health & Services and **Fairfax Hospital** submitted a letter of intent to the Department of Health for a jointly-owned 85-bed facility in Thurston County.

Swedish's new unit will accept voluntary and involuntary patients ages 18 and older and is located on the third and fourth floor of the Central Tower at the Ballard hospital.

Swedish says the space was designed to better coordinate care for patients with two chronic illnesses simultaneously, "which will not only improve both medical and behavioral health outcomes, it will reduce the cost of care by decreasing repeat visits to the hospital," according to a release.

To ensure seamless care during an inpatient stay and community based stabilization period after discharge, Swedish has partnered with Sound Mental Health.

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